

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02

DOT-00 COME-00 OPIC-03 XMB-02 FRB-03 /091 W

-----022024Z 097902 /70

R 021430Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9855

INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USEC BRUSSELS 0058

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID BC

SUBJECT: BOT-ZAM ROAD AND RAILWAY

REF: A) GABORONE 696 B) GABORNE 726; C) GABORONE 741 (NOTAL)

IN THE ABSENCE OF CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF TRANSMITTAL, FOLLOWING
TELEGRAM BEING RE-TRANSMITTED:

1. SUMMARY: AT MARCH 31 MEETING CALLED BY THE PRESIDENT,
I REPLIED TO HIS REQUEST OF MARCH 17 RELATING TO ROAD AND
RAILWAY PROJECT FUNDING (REF A). I SAID USG WOULD NOT STAND
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IN THE WAY OF EDF FUNDING AND WOULD COOPERATE IN COMPLETING
BOT-ZAM ROAD. GOB'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE ON THE RHODESIAN
RAILWAY WAS STILL UNDER STUDY BUT THAT I UNDERSTOOD THERE WERE
SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE SCOPE OF PROJECT AND
SUITABILITY OF U.S. AS DONOR. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT WE
ACCELERATE OUR PROCEDURES TO FACILITATE PAVING OF BOT-ZAM
ROAD. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING UP OUR MEETING OF MARCH 17 (SEE REF A), THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME TO SEE HIM MARCH 31. ALSO PRESENT WERE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER MOGWE, CABINET SECRETARY STEENKAMP, PRIVATE SECRETARY LEGWAILA AND EMBOFF.

3. BECAUSE TELEGRAPH CIRCUITS HAD BEEN OUT FOR BETTER PART OF TWO DAYS, NO WRITTEN GUIDANCE HAD BEEN RECEIVED. RDO JOHN KEAN, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM WASHINGTON, HAD BROUGHT REPORT, WHICH I GAVE PRESIDENT AS TENTATIVE, THAT (A) THE U.S. WANTED SPEEDY COMPLETION OF THE PAVING OF THE BOT-ZAM ROAD AND WOULD, THEREFORE, STAND ASIDE AS MAJOR DONOR AND COOPERATE WITH THE EDF BY CONTRIBUTING APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO THE DESIGN AND SUPERVISION OF THE JOB; (B) EARLY CONTACTS BETWEEN EDF AND AID OFFICIALS WERE DESIRABLE FOR PURPOSES OF COORDINATION ON PAVING; (C) USAID WAS LOOKING INTO WHETHER THE NORMAL PROCESS OF FINDING A CONTRACTOR FOR THE JOB COULD BE ABBREVIATED. WE RECOGNIZED URGENCY FELT BY GOB AND HAD REPORTED ITS STRONG PREFERENCE FOR RETAINING THE SERVICES OF TAMS AS BEST SUITED GIVEN ITS EXPERIENCE WITH THE ROAD.

4. AS TO GOB REQUEST FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING STANDBY CAPABILITY FOR RAILWAY IN BOTSWANA, I SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS STILL UNDER STUDY. THE OVERALL RAILROAD PROJECT SEEMED TO BE OF AS-YET-UNCALCULATED DIMENSIONS, E.G., IN TERMS OF MANAGEMENT, FINANCE AND SUPPLY; THIS CREATED DOUBTS WHETHER A U.S. CONTRIBUTION OF SIX OR SEVEN MILLION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DOLLARS WOULD STAND BY ITSELF. THERE WAS FRANKLY DOUBT WHETHER THE U.S. WAS BEST EQUIPPED TO UNDERTAKE SUCH A PROJECT. IN ADDITION, IT WAS NOT CLEAR THE U.S. COULD COMMIT FUNDS TO RAILWAY PROJECT IN TIME TO MEET SEPTEMBER 30 DEADLINE. I NOTED THAT U.S. WAS DOING ITS BEST TO FIND OTHER PRIORITY PROJECTS INTO WHICH THE SIX OR SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE BOT-ZAM ROAD PROJECT MIGHT BE DIVERTED. IN FIRST INSTANCE, WE ARE LOOKING AT RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE FARAH MISSION REPORT, DUE FOR RELEASE THURSDAY.

6. IN REPLY, PRESIDENT KHAMA BEGAN BY REITERATING HIS EMBARRASSMENT IN ASKING U.S. TO DEFER TO EDF ON ROAD PROJECT AND APPRECIATION FOR U.S. EFFORTS TO HELP BOTSWANA. WITHOUT WISHING TO APPEAR "GREEDY", HE SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT FUNDS FOR BOT-ZAM ROAD AND FUNDS FOR THE FARAH MISSION WOULD BE QUITE SEPARATE, I.E., THAT MONEY FROM THE BOT-ZAM ROAD COULD BE DIVERTED NOW INTO OTHER PROJECTS, THAT RESPONSE TO FARAH RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD COME IN SEPARATE UN PLEDGING SESSION. EXTAFF MINISTER MOGWE

SAID THIS WAS ALSO HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING, THAT THE MONEY FOR THE BOT-ZAM ROAD WAS ALLOCATED WELL BEFORE FARAH MISSION, THAT IT COULD THEREFORE BE USED, E.G., FOR SOME OTHER ROAD.

7. I SAID WE UNDERSTOOD FARAH MISSION REPORT WOULD LIST GOB DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES; IF ANOTHER ROAD WERE A PRIORITY I ASSUMED IT WOULD BE INCLUDED IN FARAH REPORT. OUR THOUGHT WAS THAT FREEING OF FUNDS FROM THE BOT-ZAM ROAD LEFT US IN THE UNUSUAL POSITION OF BEING ABLE TO RESPOND RATHER PROMPTLY TO THE UN APPEAL. THIS DID NOT DETRACT FROM WHATEVER MIGHT COME OUT OF PLEDGING SESSIONS ON FARAH REPORT; OUR REQUESTS TO CONGRESS FOR FISCAL YEARS 1978 AND 1979 WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY THE FARAH REPORT.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) GUIDANCE ON SUGGESTED TIME AND VENUE FOR AID-EDF DISCUSSIONS ON BOT-ZAM ROAD;
(B) DECISION ON WHETHER NORMAL PROCESS OF FINDING A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTRACTOR FOR ROAD MIGHT BE ABBREVIATED IN INTERESTS OF TIME; (C) GUIDANCE ON PREFERRED U.S. PROJECTS AMONG FARAH RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXPEDITE OBLIGATION OF SIX TO SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS DIVERTED FROM BOT-ZAM PROJECT; (D) GUIDANCE ON HOW WE SHOULD RESPOND TO GOB REQUESTS FOR FUNDING PART OF RAILWAY PROJECT.
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